

Maryland Historical Trust State Historic Sites Inventory Form

CHESAPEAKE BAY SAILING LOG CANOE FLEET THEMATIC GROUP

1. Name (indicate preferred name)

historic ROVER

and/or common log canoe

2. Location

street & number St. Michaels Marina, West Harbor Road n/a not for publication

city, town St. Michaels n/a vicinity of congressional district First

state Maryland 024 county Talbot 041

3. Classification

Category	Ownership	Status	Present Use
<input type="checkbox"/> district	<input type="checkbox"/> public	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> occupied	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture
<input type="checkbox"/> building(s)	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> private	<input type="checkbox"/> unoccupied	<input type="checkbox"/> commercial
<input type="checkbox"/> structure	<input type="checkbox"/> both	<input type="checkbox"/> work in progress	<input type="checkbox"/> educational
<input type="checkbox"/> site	Public Acquisition	Accessible	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> entertainment
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> object	<input type="checkbox"/> in process	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> yes: restricted	<input type="checkbox"/> government
	<input type="checkbox"/> being considered	<input type="checkbox"/> yes: unrestricted	<input type="checkbox"/> Industrial
	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> not applicable	<input type="checkbox"/> no	<input type="checkbox"/> military
			<input type="checkbox"/> museum
			<input type="checkbox"/> park
			<input type="checkbox"/> private residence
			<input type="checkbox"/> religious
			<input type="checkbox"/> scientific
			<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
			<input type="checkbox"/> other:

4. Owner of Property (give names and mailing addresses of all owners)

name Marion C. Marshall, Jr.

street & number P.O. Box 495 telephone no.: 745-5729

city, town St. Michaels state and zip code Maryland 21663

5. Location of Legal Description

courthouse, registry of deeds, etc. n/a liber

street & number folio

city, town state

6. Representation in Existing Historical Surveys

title Maryland Historical Trust Historic Sites Inventory

date 1984 ☐ federal ☒ state ☐ county ☐ local

depository for survey records 21 State Circle

city, town Annapolis state Maryland 21401

7. Description

Survey No. T-509

Condition

☐ excellent
☒ good
☐ fair

☐ deteriorated
☐ ruins
☐ unexposed

Check one

☐ unaltered
☒ altered

Check one

☒ original site
☐ moved date of move _____

Prepare both a summary paragraph and a general description of the resource and its various elements as it exists today.

ROVER is a Tilghman style sailing log canoe in the racing fleet, distinctive for her dark yellow hull. She was built c. 1886, probably in Chester, Maryland by the Thompson brothers. In 1902 she was fitted with a motor, since removed. The canoe measures 28' 1-3/4" with a 6' 4-1/4" beam. She has a longhead bow, braced back to the hull, and a sharp stern. She is privately owned and races under No. 11 in Eastern Shore competition.

ROVER is log built with carvel-fitted rising planks and a lapped sheer strake with a large beaded rubrail. Her construction is reinforced with a solid deck beam beneath the foredeck and sawn hanging knees support the washboards. In shape, she is double-ended. The straight, raking stem has a longhead braced back to the hull with flying wooden braces. The sharp stern has a rudder hung on pintles on the stern post. A centerboard is cased in a trunk. There is a long outrigger, or bumpkin, made of planks formed into a V with a curved metal backrest.

The canoe has two masts with adjustable rake. The 42' long foremast is set into mast partners on the small foredeck. The 32' long mainmast is set into a wide midships thwart and square mast partners. The masts carry fore- and mainsails with clubs at the clews and sprits. There is also a large jib. The wooden bowsprit is squared and set up with a bobstay and two bowsprit shrouds.

The hull is painted yellow, with white trim on the bowsprit braces, sheer rails and rubrails, outrigger, and washboards. The longhead carries trailboards of varnished wood with the name ROVER carved and gilded on them and surrounded by scrolled vines.

The canoe was restored in 1966-1971 by her present owners who removed the motor, restored the hull, and added masts. In 1984 the hull was fiberglassed as being
ff

8. Significance

Survey No. T-509

Period	Areas of Significance—Check and justify below			
<input type="checkbox"/> prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-prehistoric	<input type="checkbox"/> community planning	<input type="checkbox"/> landscape architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> religion
<input type="checkbox"/> 1400-1499	<input type="checkbox"/> archeology-historic	<input type="checkbox"/> conservation	<input type="checkbox"/> law	<input type="checkbox"/> science
<input type="checkbox"/> 1500-1599	<input type="checkbox"/> agriculture	<input type="checkbox"/> economics	<input type="checkbox"/> literature	<input type="checkbox"/> sculpture
<input type="checkbox"/> 1600-1699	<input type="checkbox"/> architecture	<input type="checkbox"/> education	<input type="checkbox"/> military	<input type="checkbox"/> social/
<input type="checkbox"/> 1700-1799	<input type="checkbox"/> art	<input type="checkbox"/> engineering	<input type="checkbox"/> music	<input type="checkbox"/> humanitarian
<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> 1800-1899	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> commerce	<input type="checkbox"/> exploration/settlement	<input type="checkbox"/> philosophy	<input type="checkbox"/> theater
<input type="checkbox"/> 1900-	<input type="checkbox"/> communications	<input type="checkbox"/> industry	<input type="checkbox"/> politics/government	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> transportation
		<input type="checkbox"/> invention		<input type="checkbox"/> other (specify)

Specific dates 1886 **Builder/Architect** att. to Thompson Bros., Chester, Md.

check: Applicable Criteria: ☒ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ D
and/or

Applicable Exception: ☐ A ☐ B ☐ C ☐ D ☐ E ☐ F ☐ G ☒ none

Level of Significance: ☒ national ☐ state ☐ local

Prepare both a summary paragraph of significance and a general statement of history and support.

This vessel is significant as being one of the last surviving traditional Chesapeake Bay racing log canoes that carry on a tradition of racing on the Eastern Shore of Maryland that has existed since the 1840's. In addition, it is a surviving representative of the oldest indigenous type of boat on the Bay -- the working log canoe -- which was developed in the 17th century by early European settlers from the aboriginal dugout canoe.

Used for transportation and for harvesting the rich bounty of the Bay, log canoes changed little over the centuries. Constructed of from two to seven logs and ranging in length from 20 to 35 feet, they were rigged with one or two sharp-headed spritsails with or without a jib set on raking, unstayed pole masts. Easily and cheaply constructed, some 6300 existed in Bay waters in the 1880s. The working canoes first began to be raced in 1840 and by the 1870s area boatbuilders were building canoes specifically for racing, with lighter, thinner hulls and sharper lines. As mast heights increased to increase sail area the canoes became inherently unstable, necessitating the use of springboards and human ballast. Also part of the racing rig is the outrigger added for balance and to enable the sail tender to sit beyond the overlarge mainsail.

With the invention of the gasoline engine many log canoes were converted to power for oystering, but were then converted back to sail as interest in racing waxed and waned over the years. After peak years of popularity in the 1880s and 1890s, interest in log canoe racing waned in the first two decades of the 20th century only to be revived again in the 1920s. The popularity of racing, spearheaded by the Miles River Yacht Club, continued unabated until the present day, although the number of vessels active in the fleet has varied considerably.

ROVER is significant as being one of the oldest of the surviving log canoes, having been built as a work boat in 1886, probably by the Thompson Bros. of Chester, Maryland. She had had a motor added by 1902 and worked steadily as an oyster-tonging canoe until 1966 when she was purchased in Stevensville, Maryland by her present owners the Marshalls. The motor was removed and the boat towed to St. Michaels where it was renovated and restored to a sailing rig. It took the Marshalls four years to restore the boat, which entered the racing fleet in 1971. At the present time (1984) the hull is being prepared for fiberglassing. ROVER is distinctive in the racing fleet for her yellow-painted hull, as opposed to the traditional white.

9. Major Bibliographical References

T-509

Brewington, Marion V., Chesapeake Bay Log Canoes and Bugeyes (Cambridge, Md.: Cornell Maritime Press, 1963)

10. Geographical Data

Acreage of nominated property less than one acre

Quadrangle name St. Michaels

Quadrangle scale 1:24000

UMT References

A 18 394020 42934110
Zone Easting Northing

B
Zone Easting Northing

C

D

E

F

G

H

Verbal boundary description and justification

The historic boundary of this movable vessel is co-terminous with the hull. The vessel is usually stored at the location indicated in Item 2.

List all states and counties for properties overlapping state or county boundaries

state n/a code county code

state code county code

11. Form Prepared By

name/title Anne Witty and Dr. Mary Ellen Hayward

organization Maryland Historical Society

date May 1984

street & number 201 West Monument Street

telephone (301) 685-3750

city or town Baltimore

state Maryland 21201

The Maryland Historic Sites Inventory was officially created by an Act of the Maryland Legislature to be found in the Annotated Code of Maryland, Article 41, Section 181 KA, 1974 supplement.

The survey and inventory are being prepared for information and record purposes only and do not constitute any infringement of individual property rights.

return to: Maryland Historical Trust
Shaw House
21 State Circle
Annapolis, Maryland 21401
(301) 269-2438

T-509

ROVER (log canoe)

St. Michaels, Maryland

ROVER is a 28' 1-3/4" sailing log canoe in the racing fleet. She is log-built with carvel-fitted rising planks, a longhead bow, sharp stern, and a beam of 6' 4-1/4". Her sailing rig consists of two masts with adjustable rake--a 42' foremast and 32' mainmast--that carry a foresail, mainsail, and large jib. Built c. 1886 in Chester, Maryland, probably by the Thompson brothers, ROVER gains her significance for being one of the last 22 surviving Chesapeake Bay racing log canoes that carry on a tradition of racing on the Eastern Shore of Maryland that has existed since the 1840's. ROVER is of special importance as being one of the oldest of the surviving log canoes and for having spent the majority of her career as a working oyster tonging canoe until being purchased in 1966 for restoration and conversion into a racing canoe.

depository for survey records

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Survey No. T-509

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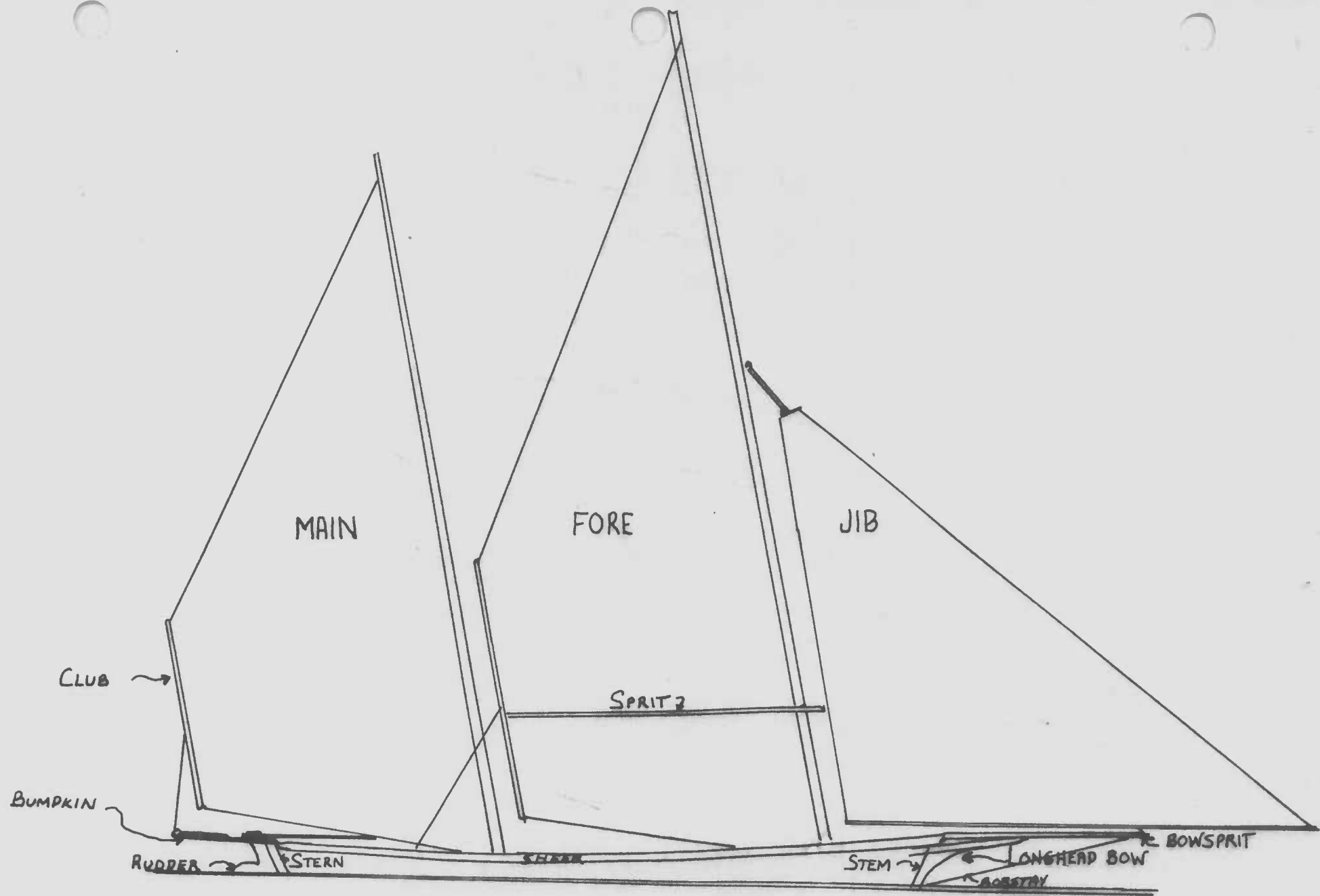
10. Geographical Data

Quadrangle scale _____

H | | | | | | | | | |

11. Form Prepared By

PS-2746



SAIL PLAN OF TILGHMAN ISLAND CANOE after drawing by J. G. Earle

T-509



T-509

ROVER

St. Michaels, Md

port bow

M. C. Wootton 10/83



T-509

ROVER

St. Michaels, Md

stern

M. C. Wootton 10/83



T-509

ROVER

St. Michaels, Md

interior hull

M. C. Wootton 10/83